

Eng. Poetry vol 29

A N

E P I S T L E

T O

The R I G H T H O N O U R A B L E

Sir *ROBERT WALPOLE.* K

*Quæ censet Amiculus, ut si
Cæcus Iter monstrare velit* ————— Hor.



L O N D O N:

Printed for J. WALTHOE, over-against the Royal-Exchange
in Cornhill 1726. [Price 6 d.

EPITAPH

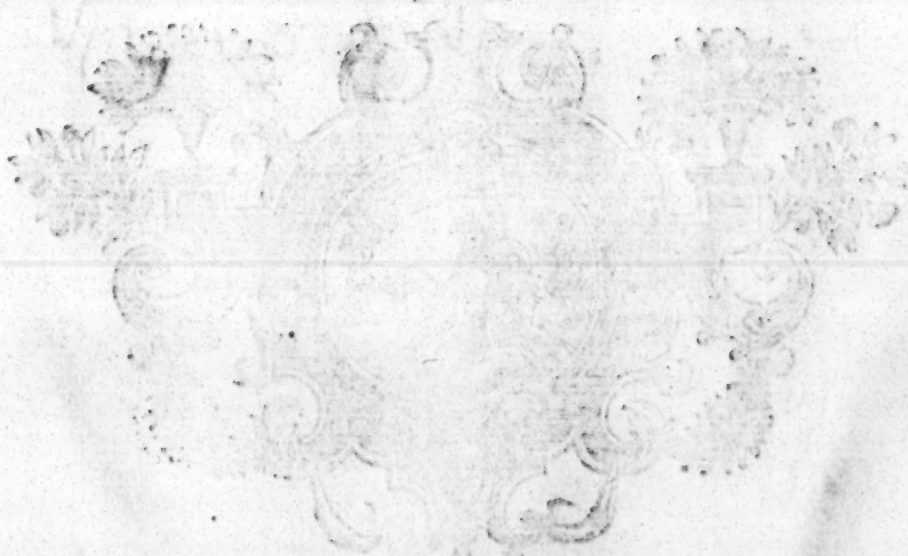
TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE



Quæcunque monumentum erit
Sic erit monumentum erit



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A N

EPISTLE

To the Right Honourable

Sir **ROBERT WALPOLE.**

TH O' Strength of Genius, by Experience taught,
Gives Thee to sound the Depths of human Thought,
To trace the various Workings of the Mind,
And rule the secret Springs, that rule Mankind;
(Rare Gifts!) yet, **WALPOLE**, wilt thou condescend
To listen, if thy unexperienc'd Friend
Can ought of Use impart, tho' void of Skill,
And win Attention by sincere good Will;
For Friendship, sometimes, Want of Parts supplies,
The Heart may furnish what the Head denies.

As when the rapid *Rhone*, o'er fwelling Tides,
 To grace old *Ocean's* Court, in Triumph rides ;
 Tho' rich his Source, he drains a thousand Springs,
 Nor scorns the Tribute each small Riv'let brings.

So thou shalt hence absorb each feeble Ray,
 Each Dawn of Meaning, in thy brighter Day ;
 Shalt like ; or where thou can'st not like, excuse,
 Since no mean Interest shall prophane the Muse:
 No Malice wrapp'd in Truth's Disguise, offend,
 Nor Flattery taint the Freedom of the Friend.

When first a generous Mind surveys the Great,
 And views the Crowds that on their Fortune wait ;
 Pleas'd with the Show (tho' little understood)
 He only seeks the Power, to do the Good ;
 Thinks, 'till he tries, 'tis Godlike to dispose,
 And Gratitude still springs, where Bounty flows ;
 That every Grant sincere Affection wins,
 And where our Wants have End, our Love begins :
 But those who long the Paths of State have trod,
 Learn from the Clamours of the murmuring Crowd ;

Which

Which cram'd, yet craving still, their Gates besiege,
 'Tis easier far to give, than to oblige.

This of Thy Conduct seems the nicest Part,
 The chief Perfection of the Statesman's Art,
 To give to fair Assent a fairer Face,
 And soften a Refusal into Grace.
 But few there are that can be truly kind,
 Or know to fix their Favours on the Mind:
 Hence some, whene'er they would oblige, offend;
 And while they make the Fortune, lose the Friend:
 Still give unthank'd, still squander, not bestow;
 For great Men want not, what to give, but how.

The Race of Men that follow Courts, 'tis true,
 Think all they get, and more than all their Due:
 Still ask, but ne'er consult their own Deserts;
 And measure by their Interest, not their Parts.
 From this Mistake, so many Men we see,
 But ill become the Thing they wish'd to be;
 Hence Discontent, and fresh Demands arise,
 More Power, more Favour in the Great Man's Eyes:

All feel a Want, tho' none the Cause suspects,
 And hate their Patron, for their own Defects;
 Such none can please, but who reforms their Hearts,
 And, when he gives them Places, gives them Parts.

As these o'erprize their Worth, so sure the Great
 May sell their Favour at too dear a Rate;
 When Merit pines, while Clamour is preferr'd,
 And long Attachment waits among the Herd;
 When no Distinction, where Distinction's due,
 Marks from the many, the Superior few;
 When strong Cabal constrains them to be just,
 And makes them give at last — because they must.
 What Hopes that Men of real Worth should prize,
 What neither Friendship gives, nor Merit buys!

The Man who justly o'er the Whole presides,
 His well weigh'd Choice, with wise Affections, guides;
 Knows when to stop with Grace, and when advance,
 Nor gives from Importunity, or Chance;
 But thinks how little Gratitude is ow'd,
 When Favours are extorted, not bestow'd.

When

When safe on Shore ourselves, we see the Crowd
 Surround the Great, importunate and loud;
 Thro' such a Tumult, 'tis no easy Task
 To drive the Man of real Worth to ask:
 Surrounded thus, and giddy with the Show,
 'Tis hard for great Men, rightly to bestow;
 From hence so few are skill'd, in either Case,
 To ask with Dignity, or give with Grace.
 Sometimes the Great, seduc'd by Love of Parts,
 Consult our Genius, but neglect our Hearts;
 Pleas'd with the glitt'ring Sparks, that Genius flings,
 They lift us tow'ring on their Eagles Wings,
 Mark out the Flights, by which themselves begun,
 And teach our dazzled Eyes to bear the Sun;
 Till we forget the Hand that made us great,
 And grow to envy, not to emulate.
 To emulate, a general Warmth implies, *general*
 To reach the Virtues, that make great Men rise;
 But Envy wears a mean malignant Face,
 And aims not at their Virtues, but their Place.

Such to oblige, how vain is the Pretence?

When every Favour is a fresh Offence,

By which superior Power is still imply'd,
 And, while it helps their Fortune, hurts their Pride.
 Slight is the Hate, Neglect or Hardships breed;
 But those, who hate from Envy, hate indeed.

Since so perplex'd the Choice; whom shall we trust,
 Methinks I hear thee cry, the Brave and Just.
 The Man by no mean Fears, or Hopes controul'd,
 Who serves thee from Affection, not for Gold.
 Who love the Honest, and esteem the Brave,
 Despise the Coxcomb, but detest the Knave,
 No Shew of Parts the truly wise seduce,
 To think that Knaves can be of real Use.

The Man, who contradicts the publick Voice,
 And strives to dignify a worthless Choice,
 Attempts a Task, that on that Choice reflects;
 And lends us Light to point out new Defects.
 One worthless Man, that gains what he pretends,
 Disgusts a thousand unpretending Friends:
 And since no Art can make a Counter pass,
 Or add the Weight of Gold to mimick Brass;

When

When Princes to bad Oar their Image join,
They more debase the Stamp, than raise the Coin.

Be thine the Care, true Merit to reward,
And gain the Good, — nor will that Task be hard;
Souls form'd alike, so quick, by Nature blend;
An honest Man is more than half thy Friend.

Him no mean Views, or Haste to rise, shall sway,
Thy Choice to fully, or thy Trust betray:
Ambition here shall at due Distance stand;
Nor is Wit dangerous in an honest Hand:
Besides, if Failings at the Bottom lie,
We view those Failings with a Lover's Eye.
Tho' small his Genius, let him do his best;
Our Wishes and Relief supply the rest.

Let others barter servile Faith for Gold,
His Friendship is not to be bought, or sold:
Fierce Opposition he, unmov'd, shall face;
Modest in Favour, daring in Disgrace;
To share thy adverse Fate, alone pretend;
In Power, a Servant; out of Power, a Friend.

Here pour thy Favours in an ample Flood,
 Indulge thy boundless Thirst of doing Good:
 Nor think that Good to him alone confin'd;
 Such to oblige, is to oblige Mankind.

If thus thy mighty Master's Steps thou trace,
 The Brave to cherish, and the Good to grace;
 Long shalt thou stand from Rage and Faction free,
 And teach us long to love the King, thro' Thee.
 Or, fall a Victim dangerous to the Foe,
 And make him tremble, when he strikes the Blow;
 While Honour, Gratitude, Affection join
 To deck thy Close, and brighten thy Decline;
 (Illustrious Doom!) the Great when thus displac'd,
 With Friendship guarded, and with Virtue grac'd,
 In awful Ruin like *Rome's* Senate fall,
 The Prey, and Worship of the wondering *Gaul*.

No doubt, to Genius some Reward is due,
 (Excluding that were satyrizing You;)
 But yet, believe thy undesigning Friend,
 When Truth and Genius for thy Choice contend,
 Tho' both have Weight, when in the Balance cast,
 Let Probity be first, and Parts the last.

On these Foundations if thou durst be great,
 And check the Growth of Folly, and Deceit;
 When Party Rage shall droop thro' Length of Days,
 And Calumny be ripened into Praise;
 Then future Times shall to thy Worth allow,
 That Fame which Envy would call Flattery now.

Thus far my Zeal, tho' for the Task unfit,
 Has pointed out the Rocks where others split;
 By that inspir'd, tho' Stranger to the Nine,
 And negligent of any Fame — but Thine,
 I take the friendly, but superfluous Part;
 You act from Nature, what I teach from Art.

ERRATUM.

Pag. 7. lin. 17. for *general* r. *generous*.

F I N I S.



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